SYNOPSIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULLFILLMENT FOR THE AWARD OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

ISSUES IN INDIA AND UNITED STATES OF AMERICA'S NUCLEAR RELATIONS, 1998-2008: A STUDY

By

GANESH NAIKA

Research Scholar

Research Guide

Dr. Rajpraveen C.M.

Research Supervisor

Department of Political Science

Mangalore University

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

MANGALORE UNIVERSITY

MANGALAGANGOTRI, KONAJE-574 199

KARNATAKA, INDIA.

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India and the United States', world's two largest democratic countries have encountered a number of difficulties in the journey of their bilateral relationship. Dennis Kux, author of '*Estranged Democracies: India and United States, 1941-1991'* has asserted this bilateral relationship as "Estranged Democracies". Given the estranged status of the bilateral relationship, nuclear relationship has been highlighting fundamental challenges rather than other aspects of the bilateral relationship between India and the United States. This nuclear issue between both the two countries have jeopardized the bilateral relations and have acted as a constraint in enhancing their mutual understanding, although both the countries are based on the same political ideological framework, i.e Democracy.

It is to be noted that ever since the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty or NPT treaty came into existence in 1967, there has been a serious difference of opinion between India and the US nuclear relationship. However, during the initial period of India's independence, nuclear relationship between both the countries, namely India and the US, started under the "Atoms for Peace' programme in 1953. It can be regarded as a beginning step in the evolution of India and the United States nuclear cooperation. Under the "Atoms for peace' programme, the United States assisted India in developing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and allowed the Indian scientists to conduct studies in the US nuclear laboratories. Further, on 16 March 1956, Lewis L. Strauss, Chairman of the US Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) and Dr. Homi. J. Bhabha, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission of India signed an agreement. Under the agreement, the United States agreed to supply heavy water to the CIRUS reactor. In addition, American firm 'Vitro' prepared blueprint for Phoenix plant, and the United States agreed to supply two boiling water reactors for the Tarapur Atomic Power Station (TAPS) under the Tarapur agreement, in 1961 and 1963 respectively. Moreover, the Tarapur agreement included the grant of $80 million US credit to the nuclear reactor development in India.

Besides given the upward trajectory in the nuclear relationship, India's defiance on sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) caused to raise misunderstanding over the India's nuclear programme in the United States. India contended that, the treaty was introduced with

the objectives of restraining the non-nuclear weapon countries from testing nuclear weapons and curtailing proliferation of nuclear technologies to non-nuclear weapons states. Furthermore, India opined that, the absence of time frame for abolition of nuclear weapons, inadequate security guarantees to non nuclear weapon states when the nuclear states blackmailed and attacked them with nuclear weapons. India also strongly argued that 'vertical and horizontal proliferation' of nuclear weapons as equal threats to peace and contends that elimination efforts ought to be proceeded in tandem. In contrast, the United States intends to curb horizontal proliferation in the non-proliferation regime. Similarly, it might be noted that, India's firm position for staying out of the treaty since the treaty contained unjust regulation led to develop a suspicion on India's nuclear option or programme.

The issues in the nuclear relationship between the two countries further intensified with India's first peaceful nuclear explosion or Pokhran-I on 18 May 1974. The first peaceful nuclear test or Pokhran-I was influenced by various factors to India: such as, national security factors, Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), technical and scientific prowess, national prestige, domestic politics and bureaucratic factors. Though, the test had unleashed a strong criticism from the United States and other major countries which condemned India's nuclear test on the ground that, India had misused peaceful oriented nuclear fuel which was brought under the "Atoms for Peace" programme. And, other major western countries condemn the test that, India had undermined the nascent non-proliferation treaty as well as non-proliferation regime by conducting the nuclear test. Therefore, Western countries urged India's adherence to non-proliferation regulation and immediately sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Among the major countries, Canada became more ambivalent and terminated nuclear fuel supply to India which it had agreed to supply to the reactor.

Even though India assured the United States that test was a peaceful nuclear explosion, the United States responded punitively to Pokhran-I by imposing sanctions on India's nuclear development, terminated the fuel supply for Tarapur reactor, embargoed the supply of dual-use of technology and imposed various non-proliferation measures to control of India's nuclear programme. The firm reluctance raised from the United State's New Media, conservatives, liberals, democrats who criticised India's ambitious and audacious move, regarded it as moral and political spin, national hypocrisy.

Importantly, the strong opposition by the United States on the India's nuclear test erupted on the ground of non-proliferation regime: because, the United States perceived the test as a challenging case for NPT treaty, and also viewed it as a direct challenge for the survival of the non-proliferation regime. Further, the United States Congress members disappointed that, even with NPT's presence, India took the decision to undertake a nuclear test. It considered by the US, this as a major failure of the NPT regime at the global level. Moreover, the test enhanced the United States anxiety over the reactive policy against India's test from countries such as Pakistan, Brazil, Iran, Iraq, Argentina and Germany among others. In theses contexts, the United States perceived India's test as one of the most dangerous events on the effect of the global non-proliferation regime.

The United States, following the nuclear test, voted against the loans in "International Development Association" (IDA), and also played an active role in setting up of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) in 1975 and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act (NNPA) in 1978. And also, the United States introduced the 'Trigger List' of items under the 'Zangger Committee'. This committee issued a resolution not to export the items which are in the trigger list to non-nuclear weapon states. It is to be noted that, the degree of sanctions imposed by the Congress was not as expected by India, and that surprised the India's leaders. The harsh reaction by the United States to the Indian nuclear explosion was explicitly intended to curtail India's nuclear development, and to prevent the other countries from nuclear explosions. However, the imposed sanctions by the US on India's nuclear programme were unreasonable and ambiguous. Because, India assured that the 1974 test was a peaceful nuclear explosion, and that there was no intention to go for the development of nuclear weapons. Further, it might be noted that, as per the Article IV of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), non-nuclear states were provided the know-how to develop nuclear activities for peaceful purposes. Moreover, according to the Article III of the NPT treaty, India did not undermine the safeguard system of the NPT. The clause of the safeguards states that, whereas the parties are subject to NPT safeguard covering all their nuclear activities, the nuclear activities of non-parties of NPT are covered only partially, by safeguards of the pre-NPT order, which apply exclusively to imported items-individual installations or materials- while part of nuclear fuel cycle may remain unsafeguarded.

In the Post-Pokhran-I period, nuclear relations between India and the United States witnessed intensive misunderstanding, and it caused to curtail the entire bilateral relationship between

the two sides. Following the Pokhran-I, the United States passed stringent resolution on nuclear programme development that, no PNE (Peaceful Nuclear Energy) assistance to other states, IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) safeguards over nuclear supply, restraint in supply of sensitive materials and technology and physical protection of nuclear materials and facilities. However, India refused to apply the safeguards to additional nuclear facilities. Along this issue, signature on Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and 'Reprocessing of Spent Fuel' of the Tarapur reactor became a major issue in the nuclear relations between India and the United States for a decade. Interestingly, the root cause for the Tarapur nuclear fuel issue was the abolition of the 'US Atomic Energy Commission' (USAEC) in 1974. In the place of this commission, the US established 'Nuclear Regulatory Commission' (NRC) on 19 January1975 with tough regulation to license all nuclear export. India criticized the US decision as, "Unilateral action by one country was unacceptable and that discriminatory policies of denial and sanctions could not be effectively applied in the long run and were to prove counterproductive". Furthermore, the US Congress members made it more difficult to resume nuclear fuel for Tarapur nuclear reactor by introducing a 'Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act' (NNPA) on 10 March 1978. The act contended that, the United States would not export special nuclear material and any sensitive nuclear technology to any country that did not maintain IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) safeguards on all peaceful nuclear activities.

The above given non-proliferation policy of the United States, led India to avoiding discussion on non-proliferation policy issues with the United States. It was India's self decision to put off the nuclear issues from the high level talks and completely reject any non-proliferation regulation of the US on India's nuclear programmes: such as safeguards on nuclear fuel and nuclear reactors, signing the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), signing the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). Given the shift in India's nuclear policy by avoiding non-proliferation discussion with the US emerged as a result of India's feeling that, 'if India makes a mild stance by accept signal non-proliferation treaty, or regulation, it would pave the way for the demand by the US to sign other non-proliferation regulation towards India'. The United States, therefore, as against India's stand since the middle of the 1980's, shifted its stance on strategic cooperation over the non-proliferation bargain with India.

In the post-cold war period, controversy between the two countries in the nuclear relationship continued with President Bill Clinton-who was a more stringent follower of nuclear non-

proliferation than the other previous US Presidents-becoming the new President of the US. He introduced various nuclear non-proliferation measures to control nuclear development in South Asia: For instance, Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) at the UN General Assembly on 27 September 1993, the United States Nuclear Posture Review on September 1993, the Glenn Amendment Act- 1994, indefinite extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1995 and persuaded by the United States to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT).

However, despite the nuclear non-proliferation issues between the countries, the United States acknowledged India's economic growth and perceived that India would be a regional power in the Asia region. As a result, during the President Clinton period, the defence agreement and strategic dialogue started between both the countries in middle of 1990's. Though, bilateral relations began to improve between India and the United States, the nuclear issues in the relationship did not solved between the two sides. This issue resumed following a second nuclear tests or Pokhran-II conducted by India on 11 and 13 May 1998.

India and the US Relationship: 1998-2008

In India and the United States bilateral relationship, significant transformation in the nuclear relationship started with the dialogues between the former Minister of External Affairs of India, Jaswant Singh and the former Deputy Secretary of the United States, Strobe Talbott, following the Pokhran-II nuclear tests. Though, the United States started the dialogues with India, after the second nuclear tests it imposed sanctions against the India's nuclear test; for instance, the US administration cut-off the direct foreign aids, withdraw the US help to trade deals, stopped loans to India from the international financial institutions: e.g. the World Bank banned sales of arms and ammunitions and related technology to India, restricted the US banks from lending to the designated institution, stopped loan guarantees to India from the federal agencies, for instance, from the US export-import bank.

Though, the United States imposed various sanctions against the nuclear test by India in 1998, the size of the sanctions were however much lesser and reaction from the United States was much milder than Pokhran-I nuclear test. In addition, the international community maintained an ambivalent response to the test. However, interestingly, majority of the countries supported the nuclear tests conducted by India. Mainly, several factors- such as economic and strategic factors- influenced the other countries and the Clinton administration to tend a soft approach towards India. Strategically, since the end of the 21st century,

generally South Asia-and particularly India, was placed in a unique position in the geopolitical context for the United States foreign policy. Further, in the middle of the 1990's, the United States became one of the main trading partners of India in economic and technology. It caused the United States to accommodate India in its foreign policy calculus than isolating India in the international affairs. Along with the US's shift in its stance towards India, pro-US foreign policy was also adopted by India following the absence of the Soviet Union.

Consequently, both the countries had started a series of nuclear dialogues between Mr. Singh and Talbott. Both the leaders met fourteen times at ten places in seven countries over a period of 18 months. This series of intensive dialogue is considered a milestone development over all such long meetings the two nations had since independence. Besides the dialogue contributed in making the US leaders realize the security rationale behind the India's nuclear programme, expectation of significant breakthrough in nuclear relations became a nightmare for the Indian leaders from the dialogues. Because, 'Nuclear Benchmark' or or also termed 'five conditions', had become a focal aspect throughout the negotiation between Mr. Singh and Talbott. However, India contended that if the United States came to discussion without any condition, India was ready to discuss on the nuclear issues with the US. Among the five benchmarks, the whole dialogue centred around persuading India to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), and thereby preventing further nuclear tests by India. Moreover, the five benchmarks had evolved on 'reciprocal basis' by the United States. In return to the signing of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) by India, the United States had decided to waive the restrictions on the sanctioning of multilateral development banks loans to India. The United States, however, does not want to compromise on the non-proliferation policy while improving the bilateral relationship.

Though the United States had maintained a tough stance towards India concerning the five benchmarks, by the middle of January 1999 the United States became mild in their stance on the removal of the economic sanctions. Regarding this, several factors influenced the United States to transform their attitudes; for instance: the US Congress support to ease Post-Pokhran-II sanctions, lack of support in the G8 group members to continue sanctions, growth of India's information technology and software export were contributed the Clinton administration to removal of the sanctions. Furthermore, the shift in the US stance towards India facilitated President Clinton to visit India in March 2000. During the visit, the two countries leaders signed a 'Vision Statement' or 'India-US Relations: A vision for the 21st

century". Therefore, given the development under the Clinton administration paved the way for the robust nuclear cooperation between India and the US.

In addition, the development of robust nuclear cooperation also occurred during Prime Minister Vajpayee's visit to the US in the early 21st century. After four months of the nuclear test, Prime Minister Vajpayee in his speech at 'the Asia Society' in New York on 28 September 1998 remarked, "India and the US were natural allies". Further, he criticised America's lack of sensitivity towards India's security issue, its blind eyes on terrorist issues to the largest democracy of the world and refusal to appreciate India's necessity to have nuclear weapons. If the United States considered these concerns of India's foreign policy, as Vajpayee hinted, India could become the newest ally of the United States in the 21st century.

Interestingly, it is to note that, the robust nuclear cooperation between India and the United States started under the President Bush administration with the adoption of the revised non-proliferation policy. The revised non-proliferation policy emphasized on dealing with the illicit proliferation counties technologically and militarily rather than diplomatically, unilaterally rather than multilaterally and through actions against evil countries than friendly countries. Along with this, President Bush, unlike his predecessor, emphasised on India in the South Asian foreign policy and made 'containment of China' a cornerstone of his foreign policy. Therefore, as balance China's development in the Asia region as well as to prevent it in the Asia-pacific region, President Bush developed a strategic partnership with India. The United States emphasis on India's role in its global foreign policy strategy, led India to support the 'New Missile System' by the United States.

Despite the above given efforts to enhance the strategic partnership, the radical impetus in the strategic cooperation was enhanced by the United States in the wake of terrorist attack on 11 September 2001. Since the terrorist attack on the United States, President Bush emphasized curbs on the terrorist activities as the foremost aspect of his foreign policy over all other objectives. Given the fight against the Taliban terrorists, the United States had found India as an ally in South Asia along with Pakistan. On the other hand, India immediately offered help to fight against terrorist activities for the United States. Following the support extended by India to the US to fight against terrorism in the United States, President Bush announced the removal of all nuclear-related sanctions against India along with Pakistan on 22 September 2001, and also announced that, the United States would invest time and resources into building strong bilateral relations with India. Further, the US licensing requirement for dual-

use technologies for nuclear and missile-related technology was changed from denial of policy to case by case review by Washington.

In addition, following the 9/11 incident, India and the US started a dialogue on technology cooperation under the Bush administration. Between the two countries nuclear relationship, restriction on dual-use technology cooperation had undermined the development of nuclear cooperation. This intensive dialogue concerning the high technology had facilitated the formation of a "High Technology Cooperation Group" (HTCG) in November 2002. It facilitated the signing of a 'Statement of Principles for High Technology Commerce' in February 2003 by both India and the United States. Consequently, India and the US dual-use technology export enhanced to $90 million in 2004 against the $30 million in the 2002. Further, in order to reinvigorate bilateral strategic cooperation between the two sides, both the countries established the 'Next Steps in Strategic Partnership' (NSSP) in January 2004. The NSSP facilitated to removal of the restriction to access to the US technology such as dual-use items, civilian nuclear application, civilian space cooperation and ballistic missile defence on India.

Following the significant development in the NSSP between the two countries, leaders of both sides; President Bush and Prime Minister Singh stated on 21 September 2004 that, 'bilateral relations had never been as close as they are at present'. Further, the US Ambassador David Mulford opined that, "It is the policy of the United States to help India to become a major world power in the 21st century". However, both the countries failed to achieve a major transformation as per as nuclear relationship was concerned. This nuclear issue posed challenges to develop cordial strategic relationship between the two countries.

Thus, the United States administration realized that, the major incentives to develop the strategic partnership with India over the nuclear issues that, recognition of India's de-facto nuclear status in the South Asia region. In addition, treat India as a responsible nuclear power in the world. It is to be noted that, to invigorate the strategic partnership the between the two countries, the United States planned to reward civil nuclear cooperation to India. Consequently, both the countries strategic cooperation had intensified with Ms. Condoleezza Rice becoming the new US Secretary of State in March 2005. Given this enhancing strategic relationship facilitated for the unprecedented "India and United States of America's civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement or 123 deal" on 18 July 2005. The major shift in the Indo-US nuclear relations with the concluding of historical civil nuclear agreement does not mean

that both countries overcame the earlier suspicion or misunderstanding over the bilateral nuclear relations. Instead, it paved the way for the resumption of the debate on the signing of the NPT by India.

However, India has been persistently reluctant since its evolution of nuclear programme over nuclear safeguards or international control over its national nuclear development. In the context of India's long resistance over the non-proliferation regime or safeguards, the agreement ended India's long resistance with the signing of the nuclear agreement. Because after the deal the United States stated that "we bring India within the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) net without joining any non-proliferation regime".

Moreover, adherence to the 'unilateral moratorium' on nuclear test by the External Affair Minister of India on 05, September 2008 has undermined India's further nuclear programme development, which is the vital aspect of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). It might be noted that, in the context of potential nuclear test, India's nuclear weapons programme has evolved as a response to China's nuclear test, and as a response to the anxiety caused by Pakistan's security threats in the 1960's and 1970's respectively. Against such a background, if China and Pakistan pose a security threat by testing nuclear weapons, India can't respond back with nuclear test due to India's firm commitment regarding conduction of the nuclear test. In this context, Indo-US nuclear rapprochement poses a major challenge to India's advancement in nuclear technology though it has been facing security threat from neighbouring countries.

This transformation in its nuclear relations with the United States might be led to lose sovereignty over nuclear development by placing the majority of nuclear reactors under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for international inspection. With reference to the fuel embargo to the Tarapur nuclear reactor by the United States, the scientists community of India suspects about the United States uninterrupted supply of nuclear fuel to Indian reactor. This apprehension around the Indian scientist community considered as major challenges, because this perception would undermine the development of nuclear cooperation with the US nuclear supplier firms by India. Along with the given certain group's opposition towards nuclear deal in India, the nuclear agreement was also challenged by non-proliferation activities in the US and the Congress members in Washington.

Significantly, the rapprochement in the nuclear relationship between the two countries was mainly evolved due to the India's potential economic growth, Containment of China, enhancement of strategic partnership with India and Terrorism factor by the US. However, divergent perceptions in the given factors between the two countries caused to hinder the implementation of the 123 agreement. Among the divergent perceptions in the strategic cooperation of the two countries, the 'War on Terrorism' had been hindered by the divergent perceptions by both sides over the nature and objectives of the war on Terrorism strategy. According to the United States, terrorism emanating from the global level with its global network should be abolished at the global level. In contrast, India contended that terrorism emanating from the regional level, particularly Afghanistan as well as Pakistan. Along with this, divergent perception on defence and military cooperation, divergent perceptions over China's Containment policy, India's perception towards the US as an 'unreliable supplier' and misperception on Non-Proliferation policy had hindered the strategic cooperation and raised suspicion in the United States.

Further, in the context of China factor behind the civil nuclear agreement is seen as a product of geopolitics interest of the United States. In the Post Cold War period, China evolved as a major economic and militarily powerful country in the Asia region. Consequently, China's growth has posed a threat to the US interest of being the only superpower in the world. As a result, the South Asia region has become imperative in the United States foreign policy and emphasised India as a suitable partner in the South Asia region to balance China's development. Moreover, the United States has perceived that India as a democratic state never resists the US foreign policy objectives for South Asia as well as world affairs.

Therefore, it provoked China into redefine its policy towards South Asia, as a response to Indo-US nuclear partnership. To balance nuclear asymmetric in the South Asia region, China assisted Pakistan in enhancing its nuclear capabilities, and supported Pakistan's aspiration to become a member of the NSG. In addition, China voted against India to become a member of the NSG group. Despite the fact that, the rapprochement in the nuclear relationship has hindered by the civil nuclear liability law, change in the US administration leadership, effects of the Chernobyl catastrophe, divergent perception in strategic partnership, Anti-nuclear protest in India. All these have posed challenges to the implementation of the civil nuclear agreement.

In this context, India and the US nuclear relationship over 1998-2008 period is more relevant in the history of the bilateral relationship between the two countries, as the above given period of a decade is considered as the years when efforts were begun through intensive dialogues since 1998 for rapprochement in the nuclear relationship between India and the US. It culminated with the India-US Civil Nuclear Agreement or 123 Deal in 2008. Therefore, the period from 1998 to 2008 witnessed a major transformation in the nuclear relationship between India and the United States.

1. Significance of the Study

India and the US nuclear relationship is one of the longstanding issues of both countries bilateral relationship. This nuclear relationship witnessed emergence of opportunity for rapprochement through culmination of unprecedented civil nuclear agreements in the early 21st century. The historic transformation in the relationship by signing civil nuclear agreement triggered debates about granting 'de-facto nuclear status' to India without signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). In this study, an attempt has been made to understand the nuclear rapprochement between the two countries from 1998 to 2008. Therefore, the study would help academicians, researchers, and students to understand the nuclear trajectory in the relationship between the two countries.

Further, this study would help to understand both countries' nuclear relations from the early 1950's 'Atoms for Peace' Programme until the culmination of Civil Nuclear Agreement in 2008. Besides, the study will also help to understand India's nuclear doctrine, India's position on Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) which would be useful to students and researchers in conducting further research on the dynamics of nuclear policy of India. Further, the study will also help researchers, policymakers and students to understand about the constraints in the nuclear cooperation between India and the US.

2. Objectives of the Study

India and the US bilateral nuclear cooperation has witnessed many ups and downs over several decades, as divergent perceptions on the nuclear non-proliferation regime have been held since the establishment of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Notwithstanding the major divergent perceptions, both countries have come together through the culmination of strategic cooperation, and as part of a strategic partnership, both countries have signed

historical civil nuclear agreement on 14 July 2005. The study examines, based on the above mentioned developments in both countries nuclear relationship, how a major transformation has occurred in the United States foreign policy towards India's nuclear policy.

In addition, the study has other objectives:

- To understand the fundamental differences of the two countries on the nuclear non-proliferation regime.
- To examine the US response to Pokhran-I and II.
- To study the strategic cooperation between India and the United States and the perceptions and misperceptions in the strategic cooperation between the two countries.
- Finally, to analyze India and the US civil nuclear agreement and challenges in the implementation of civil nuclear cooperation.

3. Hypothesis

- Development of 'strategic partnership' with India has facilitated for nuclear rapprochement between India and the United States.
- The gradual improvements in the Indian economy since the end of the cold war caused shifts in the US policy towards India.
- Terrorism factor after 9/11 became a major factor for the United States to reward nuclear cooperation.

4. Research Methodology

This research is basically a descriptive and analytical study to provide an overview of India and the US nuclear relations between 1998 and 2008; it thereby focuses on the historical evolution of India's nuclear cooperation with the United States since the Atoms for Peace program. Keeping this in view, the study has applied different theories, such as Realism theory, Structuralism theory, and Liberalism theory to understand the rapprochement of nuclear cooperation between both the countries. The study, applying these theories, tries to examine the rationales behind signing of the civil nuclear agreement of 2008. The study, therefore, relies on the primary sources, including official publications and the government documents accessed from the Department of Atomic Energy, the Indian Embassy:

Washington, D.C. The materials includes books, unclassified letters of the Department of State of the United States, Journals and articles and others. The study has also referred the publications and documents of the international disputes pertaining to the nuclear policy. The study also analyzes the opinions and statements of key policymakers of both India and the US. This study also relies extensively on critically examined secondary sources available on the subject.

In trying to examine the major shift in the nuclear cooperation between India and the US, tries to mention the evolution of the strategic cooperation which was considered a cornerstone for the commencement of the nuclear agreement between the two countries. The documents of the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian Embassy: Washington D.C have been perused. Along with this, articles and publications of research-based 'Stockholm International Peace Research Institute' (SIPRI) organization has referred to understand the nuclear policy of the two countries.

The study also focuses on the divergent perception between India and the US strategic cooperation; accordingly it highlights the major divergent areas of the two countries in their bilateral relations. The divergent perceptions on Non-proliferation regime, nuclear fuel supply, the Kashmir issue and War on terrorism campaign etc. have been hindering cordial nuclear relationship as well as bilateral relationship of the two countries namely India and the US. Such divergent perception or misperception has led to suspicion and hostile relationship regarding nuclear cooperation between the two sides. Further, the study analyzes India and the US efforts to culminate in the Civil Nuclear Agreement and fourteen rounds of negotiations between Strobe Talbot, the then US Deputy Secretary of State and Jaswanth Singh, Former Minister of External Affair of India, focusing on five benchmarks of the United States towards India. Finally, the study concludes with a discussion on features of the civil nuclear agreement and challenges in implementation of the agreement on the basis of the secondary sources, speeches, statements of chief executives (the Prime Minister of India and the President of the US) and ministers and other career civil service officials.

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- **Chapter-7- <u>Conclusion</u>**

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